

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8787

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION NATO

USIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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USIA FOR IEU/MCLAUGHLIN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ETEL, PGOV, PO

SUBJ: ROSA CLEANS HOUSE

SUMMARY: CPT TOMAS ROSA, PRESIDENT OF THE STATE-OWNED
TELEVISION NETWORK (RTP), IS CLEANING OUT THE COMMUNISTS
IN RTP). END SUMMARY.

1. SWEEPING OUT THE STATION: ON OCT 3, CPT TOMAS
ROSA ANNOUNCED THE FIRING OF 23 PRO-COMMUNIST RTP
EMPLOYEES. TWENTY-ONE OF THE EMPLOYEES HAD BEEN
PREVIOUSLY SUSPENDED FOR THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN THE NOV
1975 ABORTIVE LEFTIST COUP; THIS INVOLVEMENT WAS
CITED AS THE REASON FOR THEIR DISMISSAL. INCLUDED
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IN THE GROUP WERE: MARIO VIERA DE CARVALHO, DIRECTOR

OF THE MUSICAL AND RECREATION PROGRAMMING; ARTUR RAMOS, DIRECTOR OF THEATRE PROGRAMS; MANUEL FERREIRA, DIRECTOR OF CULTURAL PROGRAMS; ANTONIO TORRADO, DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS; AND ANTONIO BORGE, IN CHARGE OF EDITING TELEJORNAL, THE EVENING NEWS PROGRAM.

2. ONE FELL SWOOP: THE 23 WERE FIRED SUMMARILY BY ROSA WITHOUT COMPENSATION OR INDEMNIFICATION. SINCE THE DISMISSAL THE COMMUNIST PRESS HAS BEEN LAUNCHING DAILY TIRADES AT ROSA AND THE GOVERNMENT. THE SUMMARY NATURE OF THE DISMISSALS MAY LEAD TO A COURT TEST OF THE LEGALITY OF THE ACTIONS.

3. A COUNCIL OF ONE: LAST MONTH, ROSA FORCED THE RESIGNATION OF BOTH THE FIVE-MAN ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL, AND A FOUR-MEMBER MILITARY TEAM WHICH HAD BEEN ADVISING THE STATION SINCE THE APRIL 1974 COUP. TWO MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL WERE RECENT APPOINTMENTS, BUT THEY HAD BEEN NAMED BEFORE ROSA'S APPOINTMENT. ROSA, RESERVING THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE HIS OWN "TEAM," CITED THE LACK OF "HOMOGENEITY" BETWEEN HIS VIEWS AND THAT OF THE DEPARTING COUNCIL MEMBERS. THUS, WHEN ROSA FIRED THE 23 WORKERS, ACTING "ON BEHALF" OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL, HE WAS ITS ONLY MEMBER.

4. IMPACT ON NEWS SERVICES: DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION VEIGA PEREIRA AND DIRECTOR OF CURRENT EVENTS HELENA VAS DE SILVA, BOTH LEFTISTS, HAVE LEFT THEIR POSITIONS. ALTHOUGH VEIGA PEREIRA CITED THE THREAT TO "PLURALISM IN NEWS REPORTING" AS THE REASON FOR HIS RESIGNATION, HE MAY HAVE SEEN THE WRITING ON THE WALL. ROSA NAMED LT. JOSE MARIA PARENTE, A TRUSTED AIDE IN HIS PLACE.

5. COOKIE MONSTER ARRIVES: UNDER ROSA, FALL PROGRAMMING AT RTP ALSO HAS A NEW LOOK. ONE OF THE MAJOR CHANGES IS IN CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING. ONE HOUR DAILY WILL BE PROGRAMMED FOR CHILDREN AND, FOR THE FIRST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TIME, ALL CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS WILL BE DUBBED IN PORTUGUESE. A WELCOME ADDITION IS ABRE-TE SESAMO, THE PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE VERSION OF SESAME STREET.

6. COMMENT: PORTUGUESE TELEVISION MAY BE IN NEED OF MORE THAN THE COOKIE MONSTER: ONE RECENT SURVEY SHOWED THAT 56 PERCENT OF THE TELEVISION AUDIENCE "RARELY OR NEVER" LOOKED AT THEIR SETS.

7. LIKE SOTTOMAYOR CARDIA IN THE EDUCATION
MINISTRY, ROSA IS TAKING BOLD STEPS TO CLEAN UP
TELEVISION. THE NOISY REACTION OF THE COMMUNIST PRESS
ATTESTS TO THE DAMAGE ROSA HAS DONE TO PCP INFLUENCE IN
THE MEDIA. NEVERTHELESS, THE COMMUNISTS IN THE FACE OF
THE GOVERNMENT'S DETERMINATION HAVE SO FAR CONFINED
THEIR REACTION TO RHETORIC.
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